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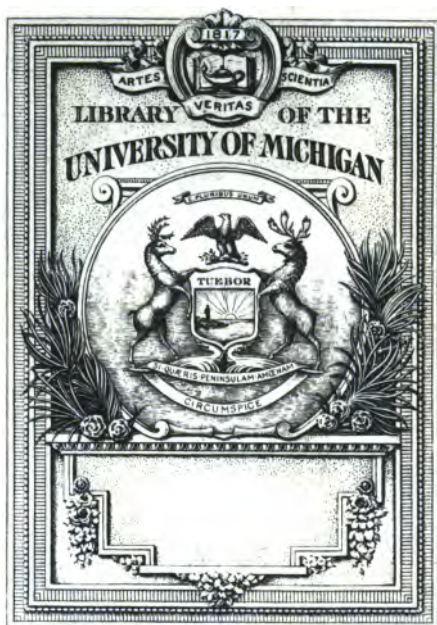
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ABSTRACT

OF THE

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS,

EXHIBITING THE MEASURES RECOMMENDED BY THE ADMINIS-
TRATION, AND THE PROCEEDINGS IN RELATION TO THEM
IN CONGRESS, TENDING TO SUBJECT THE PEOPLE OF
THE UNITED STATES TO A

MILITARY CONSCRIPTION,

TO FILL THE RANKS OF THE REGULAR ARMY,

AND A

NAVAL IMPRESSMENT,

TO SUPPLY SEAMEN FOR THE PUBLIC ARMED VESSELS
OF THE UNITED STATES.

GEORGETOWN:

PRINTED BY ROBERT ALLESON,

1815.

*for the opposition
members.*

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for the Office
no more.

"If any class fails to provide the men required of it, within the time specified, they shall be raised by draft on the whole class: any person thus drafted being allowed to furnish a substitute.

"The present bounty in land to be allowed to each recruit, and the present bounty in money, which is paid to each recruit by the United States, to be paid to each draft by all the inhabitants within the precinct of the class, within which the draft may be made, equally, according to the value of the property which they may respectively possess; and if such bounty be not paid within days, the same to be levied on all the taxable property of the said inhabitants. And in like manner, the bounty, whatever it may be, which may be employed, in raising a recruit, to avoid a draft, to be assessed on the taxable property of the whole precinct.

"The recruits to be delivered over to the recruiting officer in each district, to be marched to such places of general rendezvous as may be designated by the department of war."

This extraordinary power in the general government to force any or all of the free male population of the United States to become regular soldiers during the war, Mr. Monroe supposed to be clearly constitutional, and, if exerted in the manner he proposed, perfectly equitable in its application to our fellow citizens. The summary of his argument is,

"Congress have a right, by the constitution, to raise regular armies, and no restraint is imposed in the exercise of it, except in the provisions which are intended to guard generally against the abuse of power, with none of which does this plan interfere. It is proposed, that it shall operate on all alike, that none shall be exempted from it except the chief magistrate of the U. States, and the governors of the several states."

To meet the objection that the constitution had prescribed, that whenever the militia were called into service, they should be commanded by their own officers, he descended to the following subtlety :—

"The men are not drawn from the militia, but from the population of the country: when they enlist voluntarily, it is not as militia men that they act, but as citizens. If they are drafted it must be in the same sense. In both instances they are enrolled in the militia corps, but that, as is presumed, cannot prevent the voluntary act in the one instance, or the compulsive in the other. The whole population of the United States within certain ages belong to these corps. If the United States could not form regular armies from them, they could raise none."

The second plan is,

"A classification of the militia, and the extension of their terms of service. Let the whole militia of the United States be divided into the following classes, viz :

All free male persons, capable of service, between the ages of 18 and 25, into one class; all those between the ages of 25 and 32 into another class, and those between 32 and 45 into a third class.

It is proposed also, that the president shall have power to call into the service any portion of either of these classes, which in his judgment the exigencies of the country may require, to remain in service two years, from the time each corps shall be assembled at the appointed place of rendezvous.

By the third plan, "it is proposed to exempt every five men from militia service who shall find one to serve during the war."

And under the fourth plan, it was stated,

"Should all the preceding plans be found objectionable, it remains that the present system of recruiting be adhered to, with an augmentation of the bounty in land. Should this be preferred, it is advised, that in addition to the one hundred and sixty acres of land now given, one hundred be allowed annually for every year while the war lasts.

"These plans are thought more deserving the attention of the committee than any that have occurred. The first, for the reasons stated, is preferred. It is believed that it will be found more efficient against the enemy, less expensive to the public, and less burthensome on our fellow-citizens."

On the 15th of November 1814, the honorable William Jones, secretary of the navy, made a report to congress relative to the better organization of the navy, in which report the **IMPRESSMENT OF SEAMEN**, for service in ships of war, is distinctly recommended; as appears by the following extract from the report :

"There is another branch of the service, which appears to me to merit the serious deliberation of the legislature, with regard to the establishment of some regular system, by which the voluntary enlistments for the navy may derive occasional reinforcement, from the services of those seamen, who, pursuing their own private occupations, are exempt, by their itinerant habits, from public service of any kind. In my view there would be nothing incompatible with the free spirit of our institutions, or with the rights of individuals, if registers, with a particular descriptive record, were kept in the several districts, of all the seamen belonging to the U. States, and provision made by law for classing and calling into the public service, in succession, for reasonable stated periods, such portions or classes, as the public service might require; and if any individual so called, should be absent at the time, the next in succession should perform the tour of duty of the absentee, who should, on his return, be liable to serve his original tour, and his substitute be exempt from his succeeding regular tour of duty."

On the 27th of October 1814, Mr. Troup, chairman of the military committee of the house of representatives to which committee colonel Monroe's communication had been addressed, reported a

"A BILL,

"Entitled an act making further provision for filling the ranks of the regular army by classifying the free male population of the "United States."

The first section of this bill, provides for the classification of the **FREE WHITE MALE POPULATION** of the United States, between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, into classes of twenty five each.

The 2d section provides that within days after the classification, each class shall furnish for the service of the United States **AN ABLE BODIED RECRUIT TO SERVE DURING THE WAR**, who shall be *delivered* to the assessor, or marshal, or his deputy, to be by HIM DELIVERED TO AN OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES.

The other sections of the bill point out the manner of making the draft, and imposes heavy fines upon any class failing to fur-

